

Developing and Implementing a Youth Engagement Strategy for the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest Management Plan Revision

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Abstract

Currently, the US Forest Service is placing renewed emphasis on getting the public involved in Forest Planning. By encouraging public participation in the Planning process, it is hoped that the resulting Management Plans (Forest Plans) will be sustainable from both a human and ecological standpoint. The 2012 Planning Rule encourages Forests to involve underrepresented populations, including low-income, minorities, and youth in the revision of their Forest Plan. For this project, from January through July of 2014, I developed, implemented, and monitored a classroom, e-collaboration, and summer youth engagement program for the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest Service. The goal of actively involving youth in the Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest Plan revision was to give young people a voice in the future management of their local National Forests and to provide managers with a previously unreached group of stakeholder opinions/values. The project involved reaching out to key community members, such as teachers, youth group leaders, and youth program coordinators, to connect with groups of youth stakeholders ranging in ages nine to eighteen years old. Communication with these key stakeholders ensured that the participating students would find relevance to their daily lives and current school studies.

Keywords: Forest Plan, natural resource management, youth, youth engagement, public involvement

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Summary

The purpose of this final report is to explain how I developed, implemented, and monitored a youth engagement process for the revision of the Forest Plan for the Nez Perce-Clearwater (NPCLW) National Forest (NF). Youth engagement and collaborative input was achieved through four main avenues: local school classrooms, summer youth programs, web-based engagement strategies (e-collaboration), and an incorporation of McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS) place-based curriculum. The development of this engagement strategy included collaboration with key Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest Service employees, University of Idaho College of Natural Resources professor Dr. Ed Krumpe, and MOSS Director of Education, Karla Bradley. The implementation of these youth engagement opportunities within the local communities of Grangeville, Cottonwood, Kamiah, Weippe, Lapwai, Orofino, Pierce, and Moscow started in the spring of 2014 and continued through mid-July. This report summarizes the methods of engagement, highlights successes and challenges, and concludes with recommendations and suggested modifications of the strategies used in order to serve as a guide for future Forest Service efforts to engage youth in the forest plan revision process.

Context

In accordance with the National Forest Management Act of 1976, United States National Forests and Grasslands use a Land Management Plan, or Forest Plan, to serve as a guide that informs land management decisions (Hennessey, 2013). Each National Forest

develops a Forest Plan that contains the desired conditions, guidelines, and standards for their particular Forest. In 2012, the National Forest Service released a new Planning Rule that encourages Forest managers to use the most up-to-date scientific knowledge, latest forest conditions, and public participation in developing their Forest Plan (National Forest System Land Management Planning: Rules and Regulations, 2012). As one of eight “Early Adopter” Forests, the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest was selected to incorporate the 2012 Planning Rule into their Plan revision and serve as an example for other Forests revising their future Forest Plans.

Under Part 219 subsection 219.4 of the 2012 Planning Rule, managers are encouraged to seek the direct and meaningful involvement of “youth, low income populations, and minority populations” in order to promote “environmental justice outcomes” and ensure future relevancy of Forest management in an ever changing nation (National Forest System Land Management Planning: Rules and Regulations, 2012).

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests developed a collaborative process to provide opportunities for public input and discussion through a series of public meetings, all-day monthly collaborative workshops, and online e-collaboration that allowed for public to provide input in the Draft Forest Plan and the Forest Plan Assessment (Hennessey, 2013). Their goal of a continuous collaborative process was initiated in the fall of 2012 and will continue through the entire revision process.

Rationale

The rationale for the development of a specific youth engagement strategy was the need to provide a specific relevant and achievable process for local youth to become active participants in the Revision of the NPCLW NF Plan. Due to a lack of youth participation in

the first year of collaborative meetings and e-collaboration webpage, NPCLW Forest staff contracted with the University of Idaho to develop a youth-specific engagement strategy. They desired targeted strategies that would provide information, gather valuable input, and allow for youth to engage in dialogue to better understand relevant issues and consider youth perspectives in order to incorporate youth needs and values into the Forest Plan. The contribution of youth to the Forest Plan was seen as essential because they are considered important stakeholders within their communities and often hold diverse and unique perspectives that may differ from their elder counterparts.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Public Participation in Planning

Under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, public involvement in the development and evaluation of actions proposed by the government is listed as a primary goal. Increased awareness of the need for public participation in federal decision making has led to the development of public collaboration strategies. Among the publications describing successful collaboration strategies suggested for federal agencies is a “Handbook for NEPA Practitioners” that lays out a framework for collaboration techniques, principles, and suggestions for how and in what capacity the public can be incorporated into policy making decisions (Collaboration in NEPA: A Handbook for NEPA Practitioners, 2007).

There are many case studies of collaborative efforts to involve the public in policy making and management decisions (Collaboration in NEPA: A Handbook for NEPA Practitioners, 2007). The revision of the Forest Plan for the San Juan National Forest in Southern Colorado provides a good example where a collaboration framework was successfully used to bring multiple stakeholders, including the public at large, into policy making decisions and implementation (Collaboration in NEPA: A Handbook for NEPA Practitioners, 2007). Using a round table format, public land management agencies and the community were able to share knowledge and better understand key issues, as well as promote a sense of community stewardship.

Public agencies are doing more to involve the public through the use of collaborative techniques, with the main focus of involving diverse stakeholder groups and people representing a broad spectrum of opinions. Nevertheless, a lack of youth involvement in these collaborative efforts has been observed.

Youth Engagement in Planning

Because managers and planners often have limited experience working with youth, involving this demographic in planning is not always easily implemented (Frank, 2006). In addition, the legal and economic interests that tend to drive planning often leave little room for incorporation of youth opinions or concerns. For example, within my own observations during the public collaborative meetings for the NPCLW Forest Plan, much of the discussion for timber production involved discussion of desired quantities of sales, which were hard to understand without prior knowledge of timber as an economic resource. Nonetheless, the need for and benefits of increased youth involvement in planning processes has been acknowledged on a broad scale (Malone, 2001).

Since youth will be the direct inheritors of the effects resulting from management decisions and actions put in place today, youth input is highly relevant to managers when developing a successful and sustainable management plan. The recognition that youth have a right to voice their opinions has led to the recent movement to develop more effective ways to get youth involved in planning (Knowles-Yàñez, 2002). Although no one coherent process exists, youth activism, experiential education, sustainability, and public participation are a few of the movements that have led to the youth involvement campaign (Knowles-Yàñez, 2002, Frank 2001).

Knowles-Yàñez (2002) suggests that introducing land use decision making processes early on in young people's lives can promote an increased awareness of their responsibilities and capabilities as citizens. She proposed four overlapping categorizations of previously used approaches to involve youth in land use planning including rights-based, scholarly, practice (governmental, not-for-profit, and planning consultant), and educational approaches. Frank

(2006) described five important elements to successful youth engagement: (1.) build capacity, (2.) give youth responsibility and a voice, (3.) develop youth specific styles for working, (4.) get influential adults involved throughout the process, and (5.) adapt the sociopolitical context to be relevant to youth.

Noor and Fatima (2012) developed a framework for engaging youth in environmental decision making in Pakistan. The framework suggested a five stage linear approach with increasing levels of participation. Stage I began with informing youth about environmental problems, with suggested tools for engagement including fact sheets, open discussions, and electronic media. Stage II involved consultation of youth in order to get input and feedback and used “Public Comments focus groups.” The third stage suggested direct immersion of youth in the field using training and workshops in order to provide a thorough understanding of environmental issues. Youth committees and participatory decision making are suggested tools of engagement in Stage IV, where public collaboration on development of alternatives and preferred solutions is introduced in the framework. The last stage includes placing the decision in the hands of youth themselves with tools of engagement including youth delegates and representation of youth at meetings where policies are made.

Youth Engagement with Public Agencies

In their article “Youth Participation in Community Planning,” Mullahey, Susskind and Checkoway (1999) recognized that community planning at the municipal level could involve meaningful youth involvement. They found that meaningful involvement occurred when young people are provided with actions to influence current conditions, when they can become involved in public dialog and decision making processes, and when their influence is seen as significant to the process.

Both nationally and internationally, youth have been involved in Natural Resource Management through a wide range of strategies. One example in Australia was the incorporation of indigenous youth in order to achieve improved employment opportunities and educational outcomes (Fordham & Schwab, 2012). Mount St. Helen's Youth Stream Team is another example of youth involved in natural resource management through monitoring and restoration (Knowles-Yàñez, 2005).

An example of a public agency involving youth in planning is the Las Vegas Neighborhood Services Department and their Youth Neighborhood Association Partnership Program (YNAPP) (Knowles-Yàñez, 2005). As a part of YNAPP, youth were asked to propose ideas to improve their neighborhoods, several of which were implemented, including a community garden.

Youth Engagement in Forest Planning

Before my involvement with this project, the NPCLW Forest's youth engagement primarily consisted of college students participating through agreements with the University of Idaho to provide a liaison for the County Commissioners, participation by UI students through helping to facilitate the 3-day Forest Summit workshop, and attendance at some of the monthly Collaborative Sessions. It was noted by the Forest Plan Revision Collaboration Coordinator, Carol Hennessey that the single college-aged participant who came to the weed/range portion of the collaborative session hesitated to commit his free time on Saturdays to come spend a large portion of the day inside. A few high school-aged youth attended some meetings with their parents, but they were reticent to actively participate in discussions and they did not return to subsequent meetings. In addition, the UI graduate student working with

the County Commissioners contacted the County Extension Agent and several secondary school teachers to provide written material and to invite more participation of youth, but this failed to produce any increased participation. Thus, the Forest staff determined that a new and more effective method of youth involvement in the revision of the Plan was necessary.

Previously, few other Forest managers have hired youth engagement specialists to coordinate engagement on their Forest Plan revision. The Chugach National Forest in Alaska put forth a program to solicit youth comment on their Plan in the spring of 2013. Their youth engagement efforts involved visiting groups of students and implementing a two-hour forest planning activity that was geared towards sharing information about the Chugach National Forest and learning about what the students valued about their local Forest (Chugach National Forest-Planning, 2013). As a part of the activity, students were asked to get into groups and map out the areas they used in the forest, describe the challenges they face when using the forest, and generate potential solutions to those challenges. Lastly, the students were asked to make a mock management plan for their “ideal national forest” that used a pie chart to allocate various forest resource uses.

A basic premise for designing the current project was that building an understanding of how and where young people today use the National Forest will provide managers with insight into how these forests will be used as this current generation of youth matures and become the adult stakeholders of tomorrow. The idea that youth are essential stakeholders within the community highlighted the need to develop strategies to include young people in decision making processes. Because few existing strategies have been developed to include youth in Forest Plan revisions, the need to develop new strategies, expand on current efforts, and implement a youth engagement strategy was additional impetus for this project. Using

the Chugach National Forest youth engagement strategies as a starting point, I developed and implemented the following process to engage youth in the revision of the NPCLW Forest Plan.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Developing a Strategy

Introduction to Collaboration Processes

The development of this project was a multi-step process. During the first stages of development, I attended four collaborative meetings held at the NPCLW Forest Service offices in Orofino and Grangeville in order to garner a better understanding of the collaborative processes in place for adult public input on the Plan revision. During this time I noted the information being discussed among stakeholders, the Forest staff, and the various informational speakers. I also noted the variety of input being given by the participants on the various key issues including wilderness, species of special concern, fire, timber, and recreation. The collaborative techniques used in these day-long workshops was developed and implemented with the aid of Dr. Edwin Krumpe from the University of Idaho. The aim was to provide a non-confrontational environment where people of diverse backgrounds could listen and be heard as they endeavored to understand and explain how various provisions of the revised Forest Plan would affect them and their use of the forest.

Because day long meetings held on Saturdays did not recruit many young stakeholders to join the revision process, it was determined that a more youth-relevant and accessible method of engagement was necessary. Therefore, to engage youth in the Forest Plan Revision I used a four-tiered approach that targeted young people within local schools, organizations, educational summer programs, and online through e-collaboration. By taking the engagement opportunity to them, it was expected that an increased level of engagement could be achieved.

Connecting with Key Community Members

It was determined that input from youth within communities bordering and in the NPCLW NFs would be most desirable due to their direct connection to and dependence on the NF in their lives. As seen in the adult-oriented collaborative meetings, many stakeholders in these surrounding communities use the Forest for recreation, collecting firewood, timber production, mining, hunting, and collecting various resources. The assumption was made that local youth would also hold some of these same uses for the Forest.

My primary target communities were Grangeville, Orofino, Cottonwood, Kamiah, Lapwai, Weippe, Pierce, and Moscow, Idaho. In order to make connections to young people in these often small communities, it was important to develop relationships with local individuals previously or currently affiliated with youth. I used several methods for developing these important contacts.

Based on suggested techniques used in the Latino Guidebook (Latino Awareness and Engagement: Guidebook, 2013) I developed an email that I could send to these individuals that could be easily be changed to suit the type of individual being contacted (i.e. school principal or teacher, youth group leader, youth camp organizers, etc.). The email described the desire to connect youth to the opportunity to have a voice in the future of their local Forests and provided contact information (see Email to Contacts 1).

I then developed a second informational email that gave more detail about the engagement opportunity for those individuals who responded to the first email (see Email to Contacts 2). This email went into further detail regarding the type of youth engagement program available and provided a website where more information would be available for

reference. In order to provide incentive for both these key community members and the youth they were involved with, I decided to keep the type of engagement program I would offer very flexible so that it could be tailored to fit the needs of a variety of youth groups.

One method I found successful for making key contacts was searching online for contact information of principals and teachers within the desired school districts. These email addresses and phone numbers are usually provided on the individual school website or school district website pages. By contacting individuals within the school system directly, I was able to set up structured meetings with several classrooms. Similarly, I used the same method of searching online for youth groups and organizations. Typically, contact information for the individuals in charge of coordinating youth events, such as 4H meetings or conferences, are listed on their webpage.

The second method of collecting contacts was to use previously made connections with teachers that had worked with the McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS). As a former graduate instructor for MOSS, I knew that many schools around Idaho have taken part in the MOSS program. Karla Bradley, Director of Education for MOSS, shared a list of teachers who had brought their students to MOSS or had MOSS instructors perform outreach at their school. Using MOSS as a resource was helpful because it is a well-established and credible place-based science program that is widely known within Central and Northern Idaho's secondary schools.

Another successful strategy was the use of a previously established outreach event coordinated through MOSS. By "piggy-backing" on this outreach program, I was able to work with the MOSS graduate students to benefit both the youth engagement efforts and their goal of introducing science inquiry to the students.

Lastly, I made it a point to ask for references for key contacts at the public collaborative meetings I attended. By making stakeholders that attended the meetings aware of my intention to include the local youth in the revision process, I was easily able to gain support and gather contact information directly from people established within those communities.

Youth Engagement Website (E-collaboration)

The youth engagement website was a key tool used throughout the youth engagement process. I created this website using a free website development platform called WIX.com. This site provided free website templates that contained easy-to-use website building tools and elements. The template I chose to use was simple, pleasing to the eye, allowed for pictures, had a blog element, and projected an affiliation with nature and the environment through earth tones and tree emblems.

The website served as a place to find information about the NPCLW Forest, the revision process, ways to get involved, and who to contact. An informational page (Figure 1) described the relevance of the Forest Plan revision and introduced visitors to the efforts being made to include youth. The blog section (Figure 2) of the website served as an informational and visual tool to show participants that their opinions were being recorded and seen by other schools, as well as Forest staff. The ‘Collaboration Page’ (Figure 3) shared links with the NPCLW NF collaboration website, as well as the mapping tool used by the Forest for their e-collaboration efforts. The mapping tool was designed to allow individuals to place pins on an interactive map and leave comments describing their input about specific topics of relevance to the revision process. This tool became a useful visual element when presenting in local classrooms.

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest



Where Wild Country Meets Wild Rivers

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests in north central Idaho begin in the jagged peaks of the Bitterroot Mountains and flow to the deep canyons of the Salmon, Selway, and Lochsa Rivers. Broad coniferous forests stretch from the rolling hills of the Palouse Plateau to the Camas Prairie. The Forests are home to an array of wildlife and recreational opportunities. As the traditional homeland of the Nez Perce Tribe, their history, their culture, and their knowledge of the land is valued by the Forests. The scenic byways and historic roads and trails connect people to these special places and continue to provide enjoyment of these special places and resources to the Forests visitors.



What is a Forest Plan?

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 required every national forest to develop a management plan. These plans provide broad direction for managing the resources for the American people. The plans are programmatic in nature, meaning they cover a large geographic area and the direction is broad in scope. The plan must be consistent with environmental laws and regulations such as the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act. The forests will be revising plans following direction in the [2012 Planning Rule](#).



Why revise the plan?

The Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests both signed their original plans in 1987, nearly 27 years ago. Since this signing, there have been numerous social and resource changes. Scientific information and methodology has evolved. A few of these changes have been addressed in amendments to the original forest plans; many others have not been formally recognized and incorporated. The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests are currently completing and assessment of existing conditions to determine the need for change that plan revision will address.



Why get involved?

The new rule seeks to deliver stronger protections for forests, water, and wildlife while supporting the economic vitality of our rural communities. In addition, the forest service's goal is to be open to local knowledge about these resources as well as using the best science to inform our decisions. Although federal land management decisions remain the responsibility of the forest supervisor, the forest is committed to creating a close working relationship with communities and interested publics who use and care for the forests.



Your opinion matters!

We want youth to have a voice in the future of the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests. Getting involved in the Forest Plan revision is a great way for you to tell us how you would like to see the Forests managed. One of the best ways to do this is by telling us what matters most to you! Go to our [collaborate](#) page and find out more about how to get involved.



Proposed Action for the Revised

Figure 1. Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests Plan Informational Page



Figure 2. Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests Youth Engagement Blog



Figure 3. Youth Engagement Collaboration Page

Framework for Engagement

Place-based education

As a way to give structure to the engagement process and to aid in successful interactions with youth groups, I decided to use a place-based education framework in addition to the strategies used to conduct “listening sessions” that will be described below.

Place-based education is a tool that is used to reconnect education to a community setting. By drawing on local resources as tools for learning, place-based educators help students connect to and understand the processes at the foundation of their local social and natural systems (Gruenewald, 2008). As a function of introducing understanding of processes in their local surroundings, students are made aware of responsible community behavior and engagement. By shifting educational focus away from national or global issues often taught in standardized education, place-based education re-establishes a “sense of place,” a phenomenon of place-attachment within an individual (Sobel, 1993; Wilson, 1997).

In Sobel’s book, *Beyond Ecophobia: Reclaiming the Heart in Nature Education* (1996), the author addresses the question of age-appropriate times to introduce youth to environmental issues. Sobel makes the argument that in earlier development (ages four to seven), empathy for the natural world should be developed, followed by education about the landscape during the second phase (ages seven through eleven), and then social action can be encouraged (ages twelve through fifteen and beyond).

Listening Sessions

The goal of open two-way communication when speaking with a group of individuals about sensitive issues is essential. Listening sessions have been used by many agencies in order to share information with and gather information from the public (Review of USDA &

FS Policies and Procedures, 2010; R&D Roadmap Listening Session, 2014; Lipson, 2011). These sessions involve actively listening to the perceptions and opinions of the attendees. As a general structure, listening sessions begin with an introduction to the purpose of the sessions followed by an agreement for input to remain confidential to allow for open discussion and then a few open ended questions to get the conversation started (Anderson, 2007). The main goals of the facilitator are to enable communication, ask questions to reveal areas of satisfaction and concern, record input and reward open communication. At the end of a listening session, it is important to summarize the input given and check for understanding of discussed topics and input (Anderson, 2007).

Implementation

Listening Sessions

Below is a guide that I adapted from several other focus group and listening session resources. I used it to set expectations that I hoped to achieve with every group interaction (Biscope & Maley, 2002; Guidelines for Conducting a Focus Group, 2005; Dixon, 2005).

1. **Provide compensation/incentives-** Depending on the age group, different types of incentives can act as an effective aid to help recruit youth and reward contribution. If possible, bring cookies or a snack, especially if meeting time is around a typical mealtime.
2. **Choose the right setting-** Typically these sessions can be performed in classrooms, at youth camps, or a youth group setting where the meeting space is already provided. Make sure to determine that the meeting space will accommodate the

expected number of students and the activities prepared. Be sure to ask about the access to the Internet or wall space for hanging up visual aids.

3. **Set the right tone-** Show that you would really like the participant's input and to let them know how valuable it is to have their input. Maintain a positive, non-judgmental attitude. Be understanding, encouraging, have confidence and be yourself. It is essential to listen carefully and actively.
4. **Let participants know that they are contributing to more than a short listening session-** Tell them how their input will be used and that they can continue to give input on the plan through both the youth website and the e-collaboration mapping tool, both of which can be found at: <http://npclwfs.wix.com/givingyouthavoice>. Be sure to provide them with the website information and any contact information so that they can continue communication beyond the visit.
5. **Demonstrate that the topic is relevant to them-** "The opportunities available to you within your local forests impacts you and your community greatly, how would you like to see these resources managed?"
6. **Language-** Keep it simple. Don't assume they understand terminology, and make sure to explain difficult terminology. Try to avoid using acronyms.
7. **Confidentiality -** "Your opinion matters, but we respect your privacy, so all of your comments will remain anonymous."
8. **Foster Trust-** Provide official contact information to the teacher or youth group leader and remain in contact about the project's development and other opportunities to get involved. Express to the participants that their opinions are valid and important

because they have a chance to help shape their own future Forest experiences by participating.

Using the elements of a good listening session listed above to guide my interactions with each group allowed for both professional and fun interactions with the groups. Once I introduced myself and gave a background for the NPCLW Forest Plan revision, I then initiated the listening portion of the discussion by asking three simple open-ended questions. In an attempt to connect youth to a ‘sense of place’ (their local National Forests) and to gain a better understanding of how youth connect to their Forests, I asked three essential questions to guide the discussions:

1. What kind of activities do you like to do on the NPCLW National Forest?
2. Where do you like to go in the NPCLW National Forests?
3. How would you like to see your forests be managed for the future?
 - o **Do you have any concerns** about the resources available to you in the forest and how they are managed? (Roads and access, safety, forest fire, loss of wildlife habitat, etc.)

As I asked each question, I recorded the participants’ answers on a large notepad or on the classroom whiteboard to allow the group to see what had been said and to confirm that I understood and recorded their input correctly. During these listening sessions, I remained neutral to all answers in order to allow the participants to feel comfortable sharing their opinions openly and without repercussion or judgment. The recorded information was later put onto the youth blog and organized based on each school, teacher’s name, or youth group

name so that it could be easily found. No participant information was collected or connected directly with any input given so that confidentiality was ensured.

Mapping Exercise

At the beginning of each session I oriented the participants on the NPCLW NF map to the location of their town and its relation to the Forest. For the two groups I interacted with in settings with no Internet connectivity I utilized a large physical map that we used to place post-it notes on of places that they had been in the Forest (see Figure 4). In the sessions located in classroom settings with Internet connectivity, I use the e-collaboration mapping tool on the NPCLW NF website (see Figure 5). This interactive map showed topography and satellite imagery that made it easier for participants to recognize their towns and surrounding NF land. Public comments attached to this mapping tool provided examples of the types of information that other people within the community were sharing with the Forest and aided the students in understanding the type of feedback that would be useful.

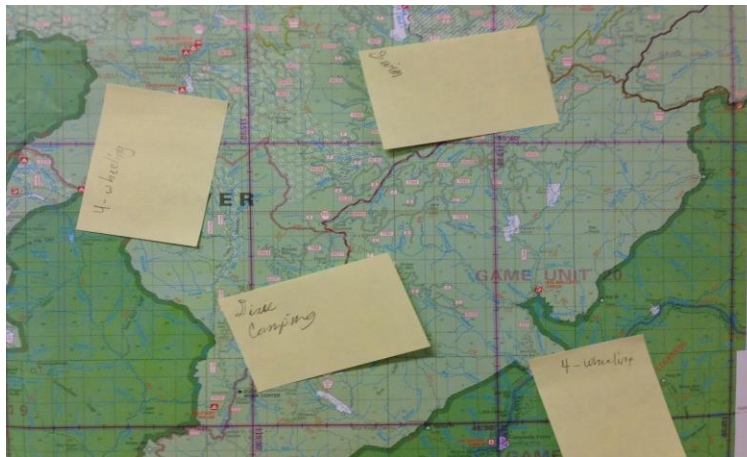


Figure 4. Cottonwood 4H Citizenship Washington Focus mapping exercise.

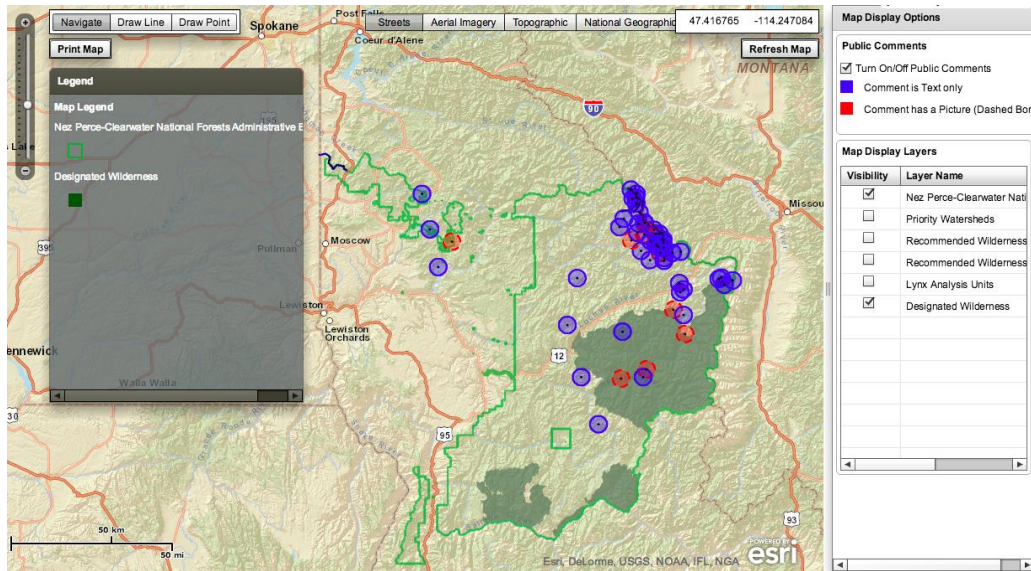


Figure 5. Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest E-Collaboration Map Tool.

Field Exercise: Value of a Tree

In addition to the listening sessions, an opportunity to engage with youth in a summer math and science camp became available. The program coordinator asked for volunteer presenters to speak with the students about using math and science in their career field, and invited Dr. Ed Krumpe and me to meet with the students in the field at the Big Eddy Recreation Site/Marina located near Dworshak Reservoir and Dam in Orofino, ID, to talk about Natural Resource Management. To combine the desire to collect comments for the Forest Plan and to discuss using math in a Forestry career, we had to develop a field exercise that could achieve both. During my time as a graduate field instructor at MOSS, I taught a lesson entitled “Value of a Tree” that was developed by Schon, Hougham, Eitel, & Hollenhorst (2014).

This lesson seeks to provide a hands-on activity that uses trigonometry and algebra to calculate the amount of carbon a live tree can sequester in a year versus the amount of jet fuel

that can be obtained from slash left over from a timber-harvested tree. Paired with calculating these figures, a discussion about the various economic, cultural, and ecological values of trees can take place. At the end of the lesson, we asked the participants to elaborate on the value of a tree by expanding their scope to the management of an entire Forest.

Chapter 4: Findings

As a result of this project, the raw data collected was made available to the Forest Planning team to be included in the development of the NPCLW Forest Plan. Below is a layout of the dates, school or organization visited, number of groups, total number of individuals, age range of participants and grades. In the end, a total of sixteen groups with a total of 362 youth participants were engaged with commenting on the Forest Plan.

Youth Engagement Sessions

Table 1. Outline of groups visited, total number of students, age ranges, grades, and general notes.

Date	Group Name	# Groups	Total youth	Age Range	Grades	Notes
April 29th, 2014	Grangeville High School	2	11	15-17	9-11th	Lower attendance due to testing, Listening Session
May 9th, 2014	Kamiah Middle School	2	34	9-11	5th	MOSS Outreach, Listening Session
May 14th, 2014	Grangeville Middle School	4	84	9-11	5th	Listening session
June 5th, 2014	Timberline School	4	71	11-17	6-12th	Combined school for Weippe and Pierce, ID, Listening session
April 8th, 2014	4H Citizenship Washington Focus	1	3	9-13	5th & 8th	Cottonwood, ID Listening Session
June 12th, 2014	4H Teen Conference	1	137	13-18	9th-12th	Idaho state-wide, Informational Booth at “Everyday Heroes” Fair/Listening Session
July 15th, 2014	PACE	2	22	13-20	8, 9th, & College	Nez Perce Tribe, Lapwai ID Students “Value of a Tree”

Youth Comments

When asking the participants what activities they liked to do in the NPCLW NF, they had many responses in common (Table 1). The “X” mark used to tally the answers received reflects that this answer was given by at least one of the participants within a particular group. Multiple X’s within a box reflect the number of groups that had an individual mention that activity or location. A majority of their answers had to do with summer and winter recreational pursuits, for example four-wheeling, hiking, snowmobiling, and hunting. I observed that many of the younger participants listed exploring, playing games, and collecting objects, such as rocks, while older participants listed hanging out, riding motor bikes and hiking. Across the groups, hunting, picking mushrooms and huckleberries, and four-wheeling activities were held in common.

Table 2. Tallied Classroom answers to What Activities do you like to do on the NPCLW NF?

What Activities Do you Like to do on the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Grangeville High School 1 & 2	Kamiah Middle School 1 & 2	Grangeville Middle 1, 2, 3 & 4	Timberline 1, 2, & 3
4-wheeling	X	XX	X	XXX	XXX
Archery				X	
Boating				X	XX
Build Forts				X	
Camping	X	X	X	XXXX	XX
Canoe					X
Climb Trees				X	
Collecting Rocks/Shells			X		X
Core Trees			X		
Firewood	X	X	X		XX
Fishing		X	X	XXXX	XXX
Float on the River				X	
Geocaching/Scavenger Hunt				XX	

What Activities Do you Like to do on the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Grangeville High School 1 & 2	Kamiah Middle School 1 & 2	Grangeville Middle 1, 2, 3 & 4	Timberline 1, 2, & 3
Getting Lost/Exploring		X	X	XX	
Hang out on Beaches					X
Hiking/Backpacking		XX		XXXX	XX
Horseback Riding		XX	X	XXX	XX
Hunt/Pick Mushrooms	X	X	X	XXXX	XXX
Hunting	X	X	X	XXX	XXX
Identify Plants			X		
Kayak		X	X		
Looking for Wildlife			X	XXX	X
Mountain Bike		X	X	XXX	
Mudding					XX
Panning		X			XX
Photography				XX	X
Pick Huckleberries/Strawberries	X	XX		XXXX	XX
Pick up litter				X	
Picnic				X	
Play in the snow (snowball fights/forts)			X	X	
Play with family			X	XX	
Rafting	X		X	XX	X
Relax				X	X
Ride Motorbikes/Dirt Bikes	X		X	XXX	XX
Rock Climb				XX	
Shed Hunting		X			X
Sight Seeing		X		XXX	X
Ski	X	X		X	
Skip Rocks				XX	
Sledding			X	X	XX
Snorkeling in Rivers			X		
Snowboarding	X		X	XX	
Snowmobiling	X	X	X	XX	XX
Snowshoe		X			
Star Gazing		X			

What Activities Do you Like to do on the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Grangeville High School 1 & 2	Kamiah Middle School 1 & 2	Grangeville Middle 1, 2, 3 & 4	Timberline 1, 2, & 3
Swimming		X	X	XXXX	XXX
Target Shooting				XX	XX
X-C Ski		X	X	XX	

An extensive list of places that participants like to go on the NPCLW NF was found (Table 2). Only several locations were held in common across a majority of the groups, including Fish Creek, Hell’s Canyon, Gospel Hump area, and the Seven Devils area. When collecting the input to this question, I made the observation that the younger participants needed more guidance by their teachers and group mentors to be able to recall the exact name of the places they liked to visit. This may be due to the fact that at a younger age they experience less autonomy from their family and are not given the same opportunity to be active participants in deciding where they go as the older participants.

Table 3. Tallied Group answers to “Where do you like to go on the NPCLW NF?”

Where do you like to go in the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Granville High School 1&2	Kamiah Middle School 1 & 2	Grangeville Middle School 1,2,3&4	Timberline 1,2, & 3
Anderson Butte		X			
Aquarius					XXX
Baby face Rock				XX	
Beaver Dam Saddle			X		
Blacktail				XX	
Buffalo Hump/ Wild Horse Lake				XXX	
Casey Showers					X
Castle Butte Lookout					X
CCC on the Selway			X		
Cloog's Jump-off					X

Where do you like to go in the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Granville High School 1&2	Kamiah Middle School 1 &2	Grangeville Middle School 1,2,3&4	Timberline 1,2, &3
Coolwater Lookout		X			
Crooked River Campground				X	
Dayo					X
Devil's Chair					X
Dewey Mtn.					X
Dixie Campground	X				
Dollar Creek					X
Earthquake Basin				X	
El Dorado Campground			X		X
Elk City Area/Wagon Trail		X		XXX	
Elk River		X			
Elk Summit	X	X			
Fan Creek			X		
Fish Creek	X	X		XXXX	X
Fish Lake					XX
Florence				XX	
Fourth of July Creek					X
Fox Canyon				X	
Frank Church Wilderness		X			
French Mtn					X
Gilmore Ranch		X			
Gospel Hump Area	X	XX	X		
Gospel's Peak Campground			X	X	
Granddad					XX
Grangeville Watershed Trail				X	
Great Burn				X	
Greer Beach					X
Hammer Creek				X	
Hanging Rock				X	

Where do you like to go in the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Granville High School 1&2	Kamiah Middle School 1 &2	Grangeville Middle School 1,2,3&4	Timberline 1,2, &3
Harpster				X	
Hells Canyon	X	X	X	X	
Hog's Bay					X
Indian Post Office Lakes					X
Irish Railroad					X
Iron Mtn.		X			
Isabella Creek					X
Jerry Johnson Hot Springs		X			
Johnson's Bar			X		
Kelly Creek					XX
Kirkwood				X	
Lewis and Clark Trail				X	
Lightning Creek				X	
Lochsa River		XX			
Lolo Campground			X	X	XX
Lolo Creek					XX
Lolo Pass area			X		
Lookout Butte	X			X	
Magruder		X			
McAllister Picnic Area				X	
McComas Meadows				XX	
Meadow Creek (along Selway)		X			
Mex Mtn			X		X
Moose Creek		X			
Mussel Shell					X
Newsome Creek				XX	
North Fork of the Clearwater					XXX
O'Hare Campground				X	
Oragrand					X
Pierce Divide					X

Where do you like to go in the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Granville High School 1&2	Kamiah Middle School 1 &2	Grangeville Middle School 1,2,3&4	Timberline 1,2, &3
Pine Bar				XX	
Pittsburg Landing		X		X	
Presidential Rock				X	
Ratcliff			X		
Red River (hot springs)		X		X	
Rocky Ridge Lake			X		XX
Salmon Pits				X	
Salmon River	X			XXX	
Selway Falls	X	X			
Selway River		X			X
Service Flats		XX		XX	
Seven Devils		X		XXX	X
Six Bit Creek					X
Skookumchuck				XXXX	
Skull Creek					X
Slate Creek		X			
Smith Creek					X
Smith Ridge					X
Snake River			X		
Soosie Creek					X
South Fork of the Clearwater				XXX	
South Fork of the Snake		X			
Split Creek Bridge	X				
Stites			X		
The Bowl		X			
The Bungalow					XXX
Three Rivers Campground			X		
Twin Cabins				X	
Vinegar Creek		X			
Wally Lookout			X		

Where do you like to go in the NPCLW NF?	Citizen Washington Focus	Granville High School 1&2	Kamiah Middle School 1 &2	Grangeville Middle School 1,2,3&4	Timberline 1,2, &3
Warm Springs					X
Weitas					X
White Bird Lookout			X	XX	
Winchester Lake			X	XXX	

A wide variety of responses were obtained from the question “how would you like to see the Forests managed for your future?” Much of the discussion that evolved from this question touched on the desire for the Forests to remain clean and healthy. Another recurring theme was the desire for access to well maintained trails. Due to a lack of time or variation in the field exercise, not all groups were able to respond fully to this question. Below is the full listing of responses given by the groups.

- 4H Citizenship Washington Focus
 - Maintain trail systems and keep them accessible (clear downed logs, etc.)
 - Keep campsites and trails clean (provide trash bins)
 - Keep the forest ecosystem healthy and keep trees regenerating
 - Keep the lookouts open and accessible
 - Protect lookouts and historical structures from fires
 - Protect/tell the history of different places (Seven Devils)
 - Keep signage/maps up to date and regularly maintained
- Grangeville High School 1
 - We are concerned about the Service clear-cutting, Too much was cut.
 - Berms make it hard to stay on trail, have to go around them
 - Please clean up the site after finished collecting timber!

- o Allow for continued motorized access around Fish Creek area
 - o Great job with the campgrounds!
 - o Control for widespread tree disease in the Wilderness
 - o Don't eliminate 4-wheeler and snowmobiling access everywhere!
- Grangeville High School 2
 - o Regulate clear-cutting in a way that prevents erosion and build-up of brush piles and access (example: Service Flats area is hard to walk through and there are huge brush piles left behind)
 - o Regulate mining near Florence better to prevent mess and intrusiveness of mining activity
 - o Desire silence in certain areas from motorized traffic
 - o Some of us would like more access for Mountain Biking, others want to limit Mountain Biking to already designated trails
 - o Don't privatize our public land!
 - o Desire increased awareness and punishment for poaching on F.S. land
 - o Clean up the "bone pile" that serves as a dumping site for hunters
 - o Increased access to information for local hikes near Grangeville
- Kamiah Middle School
 - o No more campground fees
 - o Better "No littering" signs
 - o Protect native plants
 - o Have signs about poisonous plant identification at campgrounds
 - o Provide healthy habitat for wider variety of fish

- o Don't cut down all the trees around camping areas
 - o Manage for safe wildlife environment (reintroduce bears)
 - o Stricter wolf management
 - o More hiking trails
 - o Better dirt road maintenance (between Lolo campground to Mussel Shell)
 - o Let more wildfires run their course
 - o Remove unused fencing
 - o Post LNT info at campgrounds
 - o Manage more lookouts
- Grangeville Middle School 1
 - o Have maps for special places that are hard to find (like Baby face rock)
 - o Prevent littering
 - o Plant trees in places that don't have enough
 - o Prevent human caused forest fires from smoking cigarettes, leaving campfires going without watching them
 - o Make campground stay limits longer or shorter based on the number of people using the campsites (higher use allow for longer stays)
 - o Provide good habitat for animals like bears, wolves, rabbits, squirrels, deer, birds, chipmunks, snakes, salamanders, quails
 - o Protect against pollution from cars and people
 - o Put up "No littering" signs and garbage cans that are animal-proof
 - o Provide signs for how to properly store food at campsites
 - o Raise awareness for LNT

- o Bring down the wolf population
- Grangeville Middle School 2
 - o Provide spots for scenic photography (like a tree stand)
 - o Create good habitat for birds
 - o Cut down beetle kill trees
 - o Have more/better trails
 - o Prevent poaching more!
 - o Protect endangered species
 - o Protect wildlife
 - o Don't cut down trees that are homes to animals
 - o Make sure there is good water and food for animals
 - o Don't allow hunting in some places
 - o Cut down dead trees first
 - o Provide established fire places to limit forest fires
- Grangeville Middle School 3
 - o Prevent littering and pollution
 - o Near Blacktail the loggers left a mess! Now there are thistles growing everywhere, they need to clean it up!
 - o Prevent poaching
 - o Keep invasive species in check
 - o Return the beaches to original beaches, they have been covered in grass from seeding
 - o Near McComas the 4-wheelers are riding in the creek and destroying it

- o Allow forests to be healthy through using fire
 - o Log in burned areas and cut unhealthy trees down first
 - o Keep asking people for their input!
- Grangeville Middle School 4
 - o There was a pretty view on the way to Pittsburg landing that is gone now because the trees burned down
 - o The dirt roads get messed up from vehicles, manage for better roads!
 - o Trails near Pittsburg landing have down trees that make it hard to 4-wheeling
 - o Prevent poaching! Ideas: Track shells back to owners, DNA forensics!
 - o Gates that block cars from going on 4-wheeling trails are a good idea!
 - o Put recycling bins in high use areas and put up lots of "please don't litter signs"
 - o Manage for too much smoke near town
 - o Prevent erosion when taking out old trails and roads
 - o Don't let people build on National Forest land
- Timberline School 1
 - o “Leave the forests alone except for clearing trees out, don’t put up so many gates and restrictions, export the wolves out, some trees need to be logged but not totally clear cut, take stumps out after logging”
 - o What concerns do you have about current Forest management?- “Roads are closing”
 - o “Some of the concerns I have is they might log off too much of the woods and moving animals and ruining good hunting spots, I would like to see them cut a few trees every now and then and the animals may not move so far as they

would, I would also like them to manage trails for four wheeling and off-roading”

- o “I would want fresh water and I would want to still be able to hunt elk and deer. I would want a lot of trees, But I would like there to be less Canadian wolves and stuff. I would also like to be able to go out in the forest knowing that nothing will hurt me and I’ll be safe. It would also be nice if there were less litter...Go Green! Less trails blocked off. More places to camp.”
- o “I think they should balance logging and the ecosystem because clear-cuts are bad and they should think the forest. Even the tree huggers probably use toilet paper. I also would like being able to camp at Weitas Creek.”
- o “Fix the slide before the Lolo Campground that happened this spring, thin the wolf population, stop clear-cutting everything, stop littering (it’s gross!), fix the roads that have ruts, move all the trees that have fallen in the road and trails, plow the French Mountain, open more roads and trails, clean up the areas that have been clear-cutted so you can walk, more camp grounds without paying for it, just thin the forest, more hiking trails, manage all the things, not just the most voted things.”
- o “Fix the slide before Lolo Campground, clean up all the random rocks and rubble there, stop clear cutting everything (I <3 goin’ on 4-wheeler rides but the clear cuts make it ugly), remove gates to allow for more trails, clean up clear cut areas and plant more trees, just thin.”
- o “They should replant the same trees they log, help the endangered owls and others from the wolves, stop people for tearing up the roads/trails.”

- o “More hiking trails, everything needs to be managed”
- o “I want the forest service to stop cutting down trees they are destroying the forest where animals live and where people like to go 4-wheeling. They are moving the animals out and people can’t hunt for the animals”
- o The concerns I have are that they “cut down trees that have tribal and cultural artifacts in them and cutting down parts of the land that have tribal history.”
- o “When I go for a four wheeler ride or something I don’t want everything lodged and open, needs to be more normal and full of trees and not have to worry about blocked off gates, plus less wolves and more elk, I don’t want restricted areas for hunting”
- o “Not seeing bud light cans every two feet, not make somebody pay to get in certain camp sites, be able to use barbed hooks at the North fork rivers and cricks”
- o “Make the land better for our Elk. Also, I wish they would let more Elk into the National Forests in Idaho, they should make more campgrounds also.”
- o “Kill all wolves”
- o “I would like all of the wolves to die so that we can have elk here again.
Another one is that the beaches need cleaning because people leave stuff there.
Some of the spots need cut so that we have better hunting spots.”
- o “I would like fresh clean water, reduce wolf population, quit cutting down trees as much, only dead ones, should pick up all the trash, and clean the beaches, keep everything fresh and clean.”

- o “To stop cutting down so many trees, I want cleaner water for swimmers to not get sick and for fish to not get fishers sick, pick up garbage, a better environment that is more healthy for better breathing.”
- Timberline School 2
 - o Maintain a healthy forest
 - o Keep it open for Public Access
 - o Allow for certain areas of wildlife protection
 - o Keep it clean from pollution
 - o Replant after logging
 - o Harvest unhealthy trees
 - o No littering
 - o Keep fish populations healthy
 - o Re-open the road to the Campground near Fish Creek and Mex Mountain
 - o Don't allow hunting in highly populated areas
 - o Add more signs for directions along trails
 - o Protect endangered wildlife
- 4H Teen Conference
 - o Keep the Forests clean!
 - o Keep the Forests Green!
 - o Keep trails open for public access.
 - o Allow for jobs in logging to continue, don't oppose logging altogether
 - o Regulate Campground use according to visitor numbers
 - o Protect Wildlife

- o There should be a balance between wilderness and public use land
- o Allow for recreation such as rock climbing, Dirt bike riding, and trail riding by keeping trails clean.
- o Maintain historical monuments
- o Keep plant life healthy
- o Don't clear-cut
- o Prevent erosion
- o Keep a balance between trees cut and trees planted/regrowth
- o Use logging as a fire management tool
- o Maintain trails for multiple uses- we can't enjoy the forests if we can't get in to see it!
- o Keep horse trails safe
- o Keep river and plant ecosystems clean to benefit people, plants, and animals
- o Use better invasive species management- especially in wilderness/back country areas
- o Use the best management techniques known for weed management
 - Sheep grazing, etc.
- o We would like to see more wildlife: beavers, moose, elk, etc.
- o Possible management technique: Rotate area regulations for multiple uses (ex. recreation, mining, replanting) to have less impact
- PACE Math and Science Camp
 - o Trees hold many values including fuel for fire, paper, pencils, shelter/homes, teepee poles, oxygen for breathing, wind shelter, shade, and supplies. Beyond

the human uses, a tree also provides homes and protection for animals, as well as clean air and water.

Chapter 5: Summary & Discussion

Based on my experiences throughout the project, I have compiled a description of key challenges, innovative responses, emerging best practices and suggestions for the future that I will share in this section.

As described in the introduction to the project, one of the key challenges initially faced by the NPCLW Forests was that the adult oriented day-long meetings on Saturdays was too much of a commitment and had little appeal for youth stakeholders. By addressing the need to create a youth-friendly approach for commenting on the plan, this project allowed for this previously underrepresented stakeholder group to have a voice. The findings of this project suggest a wide range of values that youth wish to be represented in and protected by the Forest Plan and should be taken into consideration by the Forest managers as they develop and propose the new Forest Plan and alternatives.

Another key challenge that I experienced during the project was that initiating the development and implementation of the youth engagement strategies did not coincide with the timing of the general public engagement efforts. The offset of the timing between these two public involvement efforts meant that youth were not as involved in the earlier stages and may have missed opportunities for comment early on. Therefore, one suggestion for future Forest Planning efforts would be to involve youth in the early stages of the planning process to allow for more meaningful and continued youth involvement.

Because connecting to local rural youth directly is not easy, I reached out to principals, teachers, youth group leaders, and youth program coordinators to create a network for connecting to youth stakeholders and to inform them about the opportunities available to get youth involved. The fact that youth and their teachers/group mentors are very busy people

also was another key challenge that must be met with patience and persistence, and the understanding that making meetings happen will take more effort and time than is anticipated. I found that in many cases it was necessary for me to make multiple attempts to connect with new contacts before they would respond. Being persistent, but not pushy, let those individuals know that serious efforts were being made to include their local youth.

In creating a strategy for youth involvement, another key challenge was deciding what kind of input and involvement the Forest managers would find most meaningful to the revision plan or to the youth stakeholders themselves. One alternative avenue initially considered was to ask youth to comment directly on the desired conditions, objectives, and standards being written for the Plan, mimicking the public collaborative meetings. Because these documents were laden with contextual and specific Forest Plan terminology, it was felt that this would not be appropriate or relevant for youth.

Being able to connect youth to the importance of land management and its relevance to their future was essential to the project. Without this connection, the participants I interacted with would have had little incentive to give their input. As described in the methods section, reconnecting youth to a “sense of place” within their local community provides incentive for youth to act as responsible stewards of the places that are special to them. A suggestion for the future would be to incorporate more field exercises that allow for youth to take trips into the Forests to give a direct visual context to the discussion of Forest management and planning.

The youth engagement website where students and teachers could go to find out information about the Forest Management Plan revision, how it is relevant to them, and how they can get involved in the collaborative process was one of the best practices used

throughout the project. The initial effort to design the website was well worth the effort because it not only acted as an all-in-one resource for the project, but it also allowed students to recognize that their input is visible and recognized. One key challenge when using this website was the lack of a clear and concise domain name. In the future, I would suggest investing the money to obtain a domain name that is easy to remember.

Over the 8-month course of this project, I have met with just over 360 youth participants ranging in ages 9 to 18 years old from local schools and youth groups in Grangeville, Pierce, Weippe, Lapwai, Cottonwood, and Kamiah, Idaho. In addition, I was able to interact with students from all over Idaho at the 4H Teen Conference held in Moscow where I was able to gain a broader youth perspective on the Management Plan.

The kind of feedback obtained by this project is invaluable because it allows for an insight into what is important for future generations of Forest users. It was truly surprising to find out how connected most of the participants are to their forests, not only in how much they use them, but also how much they care about them. The strategies described in this final report are only a few of the available techniques that can be used to successfully involve youth in Forest Plan revision and development. It is my hope that these efforts can be expanded upon and improved in the future.

* * *

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Appendices

Appendix A: Email to Key Contacts 1

Hi _____,

My name is Kate McGraw and I am a McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS) graduate student at the University of Idaho. I am working with the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest Service on their 2012 Forest Plan Revision, which lays the groundwork for the management direction of the entire forest. I am contacting you on behalf of the Forest Service because we think it is essential to gain local youth input on the Forest Plan and would like to give youth a voice in the future management of their National Forests. I am putting together a short fun, interactive, and informative program that would facilitate youth input on the Forest Plan Revision. I would love to work with you to bring this opportunity to the middle/high school students in your _____ this spring or summer. Please email me or call me at your earliest convenience (304-319-3221) to discuss the possibility of getting youth involved at your _____. Hope to hear from you soon!

Thanks,

Appendix B: Email to Key Contacts 2

Hi _____,

Thanks for expressing interest in helping the Forest Service connect to local youth! We have created a 45-minute classroom or after-school listening session that is geared towards understanding how youth connect to and use the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests. As a part of updating the Forest Management Plan, the Forest Service would like to learn more about how/where students currently use the Forests, what Forest resources hold value for

them, and any ideas on how they would like to see the Forests managed for their future. Here is a website that provides more information, a blog where youth input can be viewed, and other avenues for collaboration in the revision process:

<http://npclwfs.wix.com/givingyouthavoice>

The program is very flexible and can be changed to fit your specific time frame, so let me know how I can best tailor it to suit the needs of you and your students. I would love the chance to meet with as many interested students as possible, so if there are other teachers who would also want to involve their students, it would be great to meet with other classrooms while I am there.

Please let me know what day and time would be the most convenient for me to come visit and talk with the students. I look forward to hearing what they have to say!

Thanks,